

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 FEA-01 ACDA-05

AGR-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 OFA-01

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FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 JUSE-00 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-01 OES-03 OMB-01 PA-01 PM-04

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAL-01 /129 W

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R 260330Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1855

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRWN

USUN 39

US MISSION GENEVA 17

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 0195

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PORG PFOR M

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SUBJECT: MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS: OMANGOV'S HANDLING OF MULTILATERAL  
ISSUES

REF: STATE 37591

1. SUMMARY: WITH SINGLE EXCEPTION OF LOS, OMANGOV'S INTEREST

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IN AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ISSUES ARE

MOTIVATED BY DESIRE TO AVOID CONTROVERSY, ESPECIALLY MISALIGNMENT WITH ARAB STATES MOST IMPORTANT TO OMANI DOMESTIC INTERESTS. THIS PASSIVE, LOW-PROFILE APPROACH IS WELL-SERVED BY RELATIVELY SMALL, INEXPERIENCED BUREAUCRACY. LIKE IT OR NOT, TENDING INTER-ARAB INTERESTS IS FAR MORE VITAL TO OMAN'S WELL-BEING THAN IS CATERING TO USG POSITIONS, EVEN IN NUMEROUS INSTANCES WHEREIN OMANGOV POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY MIGHT BE SUPPORTIVE OF THE LATTER. GIVEN MINIMAL BILATERAL INTERESTS, THERE ARE VERY FEW TOOLS AT USG DISPOSAL TO USE IN PRESSING FOR OMANGOV SUPPORT IN INTERNATIONAL FORA. END SUMMARY.

2. OMAN AND US SHARE MEMBERSHIP IN UN, WHO, UNESCO, FAO, ICAO AND IMF. FONMIN UNDERSECRETARY HIMSELF NOT SURE ABOUT OMANI MEMBERSHIP IN IMCO AND UNIDO--AN ELOQUENT TESTIMONY TO IMPORTANCE ATTACHED TO THOSE ORGANIZATIONS. (N.B. WE SUBSEQUENTLY CONFIRMED THAT OMAN IS MEMBER OF UNIDO.) MORE IMPORTANT IN TERMS OF OMANGOV OBJECTIVES AND BEHAVIOR VIS A VIS MULTILATERAL AFFAIRS IS OMANI ASSOCIATION WITH GROUPS TO WHICH USG IS NOT A PARTY--NAMELY THE ARAB LEAGUE AND NAC. MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, OMANI STANCE IN FORMER CATEGORY IS AND WILL BE DETERMINED BY CONSENSUS POSITIONS OF LATTER.

3. EMBASSY KNOWS OF NO PLANS FOR OMAN TO JOIN OTHER INTERNATIONAL GROUPINGS, NOR DO WE ANTICIPATE OMANGOV WILL PUT FORWARD CANDIDATES FOR ANY SIGNIFICANT POSITIONS. DURING FEBRUARY 21 CONVERSATION, FONMIN UNDERSECRETARY STATED THAT ONLY MULTILATERAL ISSUE WARRANTING OMANGOV DIRECT ATTENTION AND INITIATIVE IS LOS. QUESTION OF STRAITS PASSAGE IS FOCUS FOR OMANI ATTENTION (MUSCAT 184).

4. AS IMPLIED ABOVE, OMAN LOOKS FIRST TO ARAB LEAGUE, THEN TO NAC FOR GUIDANCE ON MULTILATERAL PROBLEMS. IN THOSE INSTANCES IN WHICH NEITHER AL NOR NAC DEVELOPS CONSENSUS, OMAN MOST OFTEN WILL BE GUIDED BY POSITIONS OF SAUDI ARABIA, JORDAN, EGYPT AND QATAR (POSSIBLY IN DESCENDING ORDER). OMANIS ARE MODEST IN TERMS OF THEIR INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS AND DISINCLINED TO EXERT THEMSELVES IN TRYING TO INFLUENCE POLICIES OR VOTES OF OTHERS, EVEN WITHIN ARAB CAUCUS.

5. VENUE OF INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS IS FACTOR IN DETERMINING  
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DEGREE OF CONTROL OVER OMANDELS BY CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. WITH ONLY SMALL NUMBER OF RESIDENT EMBASSIES ABROAD (16 AT LATEST COUNT) COMMUNICATIONS PRESENT REAL PROBLEMS. NEW YORK, GENEVA AND VIENNA ARE EXCEPTIONS, SINCE MISSIONS ARE MAINTAINED IN EACH OF THOSE CITIES. ON ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO OMAN, DELEGATES ARE INSTRUCTED; ON OTHER ISSUES, THEY EXERCISE CONSIDERABLE AUTONOMY WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF KEEPING IN STEP WITH ARAB CAUCUS OR NAC POSITIONS. IF ITEM IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY DE-

FINED IN KEEPING WITH THESE CRITERIA, OMANDEL WILL EITHER REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS OR (MORE LIKELY) ABSTAIN OR ABSENT SELF FROM VOTING.

6. FURTHER ON QUESTION OF DELEGATE BEHAVIOR, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT NUMBER OF OMANDELS ARE THIRD COUNTRY ARABS (PRIMARILY EGYPTAINS AND TUNISIANS). TO EMBASSY KNOWLEDGE, THIS HAS NEVER RESULTED IN PROBLEMS OR EMBARRASSMENT FOR OMANGOV, ALTHOUGH POTENTIAL EXISTS. LIKEWISE, DELEGATIONS TO SPECIALIZED AGENCY OR TOPICAL MEETING GENERALLY ARE FORMED BY MINISTRY MOST DIRECTLY INTERESTED (E.G., HEALTH MINISTRY FOR WHO SESSIONS, ETC.) THESE REPORT THROUGH FONMIN, BUT LATTER TRADITIONALLY DEFERS ALL DECISION MAKING TO PARENT MINISTRY. THIS DIFFUSION OF CONTROL CONCEIVABLY COULD LEAD TO OMANGOV ACTIONS IN ONE FORUM NOT BEING COORDINATED WITH POLICIES ESPOUSED IN ANOTHER.

7. NONE OF PRESENT OMANI DELEGATES HAS INDEPENDENT POLITICAL POWER.

8. OMANGOV, LARGELY FOR OWN REASONS, FULLY SUPPORTED USG POSITION ON KOREAN ISSUE AT LAST UNGA. THEY WILL ARE SMARTING A BIT OVER SOME OF SUBSEQUENT CRITICISM AND CONSEQUENTLY PROBABLY WILL BE MORE RELUCTANT IN FUTURE TO GET OUT IN FRONT OF THEIR ARAB BRETHERN. AS FONMIN UNDERSECRETARY CANDIDLY STATED, OMAN WOULD LIKE TO HELP USG--IF AND WHEN THIS DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH INTER-ARAB THINKING. GIVEN SUFFICIENT ADVANCE NOTIFICATION, CONSULTATIONS COULD BE USEFUL--UNDERSECRETARY NOTED IN PASSING THAT DEMARCHE ON 3 OTH UNGA RESOLUTIONS ON DECOLONIZATION CAME TOO LATE. INDEED, OMANGOV IS KEENLY AWARE OF AND RECEPTIVE TONHHESIS THAT THERE IS CONNECTION BETWEEN MULTILATERAL BEHAVIOR AND BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS. IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE OMAN PERCEIVES OF MORE DIRECT BILATERAL FEEDBACK

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FROM PLACES SUCH AS CAIRO AND JIDDA RATHER THAN WASHINGTON THAT IT SOMETIMES ALIGNS ITSELF WITH "THIRD WORLDERS" AGAINST USG. OMANGOV HAS NEVER APPROACHED EMBASSY SEEKING SUPPORT ON ISSUE OF CONCERN TO OMAN. CONCEIVABLY, WE COULD WORK A HORSETRADE ON QUESTION OF INNOCENT VS. FREE PASSAGE THROUGH STRAITS, BUT WE ARE UNCERTAIN THIS WOULD BE ATTRACTIVE TO USG. HENCE, OUR EFFECTIVENESS IS LIMITED TO EXERCISING MARGINAL USG INFLUENCE ON ISSUES OF MARGINAL CONCERN TO OMAN.

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## Message Attributes

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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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